Won by Prayer

Rev. Masayoshi Oshikawa

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REV. MASAYOSHI OSHIKAWA.

Frontispiece.

WON BY PRAYER;

OR,

THE LIFE AND WORK

OF

REV. MASAYOSHI OSHIKAWA.

BY

REV. ALLEN R. BARTHOLOMEW,
Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in the United States.

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Dedication.

TO MY DEAR WIFE.

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PREFACE.

BELIEVING that the object ennobles the gift, this little volume is affectionately laid on the altar of Foreign Missions. It is the fruit of many pleasant interviews.

The Author ascribes no merit to it; yet, if the simple story of a life so full of self-denials, thrilling incidents and abundant labors will help to fan the sacred fire of Evangelization in the heart of the Reformed Church into a mighty blaze, he will feel amply repaid for his work.

To this end, may the Lord grant it a hearty welcome and a kind perusal!

A. R. B.

POTTSVILLE, PENNA., September 16, 1889.

"READ then; but, first, thyself prepare
To read with zeal, and mark with care;
And when thou read'st what here is writ,
Let thy best practice second it:
So twice each sentence read shall be,—
First on the page, and next in thee."

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I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"SAVIOUR! sprinkle many nations,
Fruitful let Thy sorrows be;
By Thy pains and consolations,
Draw the Gentiles unto Thee.
Of Thy cross the wondrous story,
Be it to the Gentiles told;
Let them see Thee in Thy glory
And Thy mercy manifold."

WON BY PRAYER;

OR,

THE LIFE AND WORK OF REV. MASAYOSHI OSHIKAWA.

INTRODUCTORY.

AS the subject of this brief sketch is a native of Japan, it is proper to preface the history of his life and work with a few words on the Empire itself and its present needs. Japan is our next door neighbor. But for the wide ocean the people of the two nations could shake hands. It is, beyond a doubt, the most beautiful country in the whole world. No one can visit this fairy land without exclaiming,—"The hand that made thee is divine." Foreigners who have seen the lofty mountains, the myriad islands, the magnificent groves and the sparkling waters of Japan, are

enthusiastic in their descriptions of this land of wondrous beauty. It is not surprising that the botanist finds here a field where he can feast his soul and store his mind with a study of its varied Flora. Japan is known as the land of the "Rising Sun." The people are kind, clever, active, bright, sturdy, patriotic and wealthy. It seems they look to America for their social customs, civil polity and educational advantages. Almost every modern improvement found there was taken from our country. The nation has put us under great moral responsibilities. If there be any great missionary field of the earth that the Lord of the harvest expects us to cultivate for Him, it surely is Japan. No other nation bids so fair to enroll itself under the crimson banner of the Cross.

Japan is ripe for the Christian religion. Souls hunger for the Bread of life. Delay to supply them with the means of grace is dangerous. Unless those people can be fed with the true meat and drink of the soul, they will go into the fields of the world and gather the wild gourds of sin. They are giving up a poor faith and they ask for a better. Japan is bound to imi-

tate America, and if they do not take our religion, they will take our infidelity ; if they do not copy our virtues, they will surely acquire our vices. The question that confronts the Christian people of our land is,—"What shall be the future religion of Japan?" Infidels are busy at work. Tracts by skeptical writers are spread broadcast throughout the empire. Can we not stay the work of the enemies of the Cross? The contest in Japan will not be between Shintoism and Christianity, but between Christianity and Infidelity. From the tidings that come to us from the missionaries on the field we may infer that the contest between the rival forces at work for the mastery will be brief and fierce. A few years will determine the issue. If Christianity fails to triumph in the conflict, the censure will rest upon us. Skepticism is an exotic in Japan. This poisonous plant was taken there from Europe and America. What a disgrace it will be to these Christian nations should this destructive plant take root and thrive in hearts and minds so eager for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are young men in Japan who boast that there is

no God, no soul, no hell. This is the dark side of the picture, but the bright side appears when these very persons come under the power of the truth and become the brightest and best defenders of the Christian faith. It is a repetition of the old story of Saul *persecuting*, and of Paul *prosecuting* the work of the Lord. God's word cannot be broken. God's cause will prevail. The Church of Christ is one in Japan. Christian union is swaying such a shining sceptre and presenting such a formidable front in the battle with the enemies of the Cross that we need not fear for the result.

One of the most hopeful indications in the mission work of Japan is the spirit of liberality among the native Christians. Almost every native Church is a home missionary society. Another striking feature is the disparity of the sexes in the membership. There are more men than women in the Church of Christ of Japan. The secret of this is, no doubt, the low condition of the women in heathen lands. We know that this is not the case in Christian lands.

There never was a time in the history of

NATIVE HOUSE. Page 17.

missions when the field was more open for work among the women. Do the women of America know that eighteen millions of their own sex are standing on the threshold of that higher, nobler, Christian elevation to true womanhood? When we view the vast field and the immense population of the empire we cannot but exclaim: "Who is sufficient for these things?" There are about two hundred and fifty foreign Protestant missionaries among thirty-eight millions of people. How can these few laborers reach so many souls? The native pastors and evangelists are doing effective service, but the cry is for more men and means. Truly the demands of the present hour are urgent. The command of the Great Captain of our salvation is written in letters of light over the door of the Church: "Go, Teach, Baptize, Save."

That we as pastors may intelligently lead the people in the work of missions, we must acquaint ourselves with the facts as they come to us fresh from the field. Experience has taught us that the people do not go beyond their pastors in zeal and activity, in knowledge

and liberality. Our people need more light on the subject of missions. Give them facts, and you have the fuel in your hands wherewith to kindle the fire of missions in their hearts. In order that we as a Church may share the joy in gathering the large harvest of souls for Christ in Japan, we must be active. May the Lord open the hearts, the eyes, the hands and the purses of our people, so that as a church we may accomplish our work in the world.

Oh, for grace to strengthen our faith and inspire our courage. The voice of prophecy, the words of Jesus, the Acts of the Apostles, the history of Missions and the witness of the Spirit, all encourage us to believe that the Kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and that "all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

II.

ANCESTRY.

"IT is indeed a blessing when the virtues
Of noble races are hereditary,
And do derive themselves from the imitation
Of virtuous ancestors."

ANCESTRY.

MASAYOSHI[1] OSHIKAWA[2] was born at Matsuyama,[3] Iyo, in the southern part of Japan, December 16, 1850.

There are two classes in Japan: *Samurai* and *Heimin*. To the first class belong the protectors, scholars and soldiers of the country. To the second class belong the merchants, mechanics and farmers. Oshikawa's father was a man of rank. All his ancestors lived in the North of Japan, and belonged to the nobler class, but for some unknown cause they left the province and settled at Tokio.[4]

The supposition is that the desire for conquering more provinces, and thus increasing their power, led them to forsake the province of the North. Having thus fallen from the rank of Daimio[5] they became members of the

[1] Righteousness.
[2] Running Stream.
[3] Pine Mountain.
[4] Capital of the East.
[5] Great Land Owner.

Buke.[1] As such they were entitled to hereditary revenues, free from taxation, and were the wielders of the sword and pen. "To the Samurai Japan looks to-day for safety in war and progress in peace. The Samurai is the soul of the nation. This is the class which for centuries has monopolized the arms, polite learning, patriotism and intellect of Japan. They are the men whose minds have been ever open to learn, from whom sprung the ideas that once made, and which later overthrew the feudal system, which wrought the mighty reforms that swept away the Shogunate (governor) in 1868, restored the Mikado (the gate) to ancient power, who introduced those ideas that now rule Japan and sent their sons abroad to study the civilization of the West."—*Griffis*, 1876.

The ancestral name is Hashimoto (near the bridge). His father Takuji (home ruler) was a follower of the teachings of Confucius, and his mother, Tada (only) a strong adherent of Buddha.

There is one point of agreement between the believers of Confucianism and Buddhism, viz. :

[1] Military Family.

the worship of ancestors. The intelligent men as a rule are hero-worshippers. They believe that the dead are superior to the living, and hence they worship them. Ancestral worship consists in cherishing their memory, in imitating their virtues and in practicing their precepts. Although the parents were adherents of different religious beliefs, yet the creeds of Confucius and Buddha require the worshipper to honor and adore his dead ancestors, thereby causing no conflict on this point.

In the fierce struggle of 1867 between the conservatives and reformers the father died. He had a strong love of country, and a serious quarrel with a reformer led him to take his own life with the sword. His family view this as a martyr's death. He did not like to see the foreigners gaining any foothold in his native country, because he was afraid that they might corrupt the morals and customs of the people. His mind and heart were open to receive any good suggestions from the foreigners, but he was solicitous to preserve the ancient customs and manners. He had the welfare of his country at heart, and before his death was much worried about the future policy of Japan.

III.

CHILDHOOD.

"DELIGHTFUL task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
To pour the fresh instruetion o'er the mind,
To brcathe the enlivening spirit and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast!"

CHILDHOOD.

OSHIKAWA was the fifth of seven children. It was the custom on the eighth day to bring the child to the shrine of the family god, to ask a blessing upon it and to offer a gift, which usually found its way into the pocket of the priest. This act was a dedication of the child to the god. The mother early taught the lad to worship in the home as well as in the temple. Great stress was laid on the necessity of children being true, earnest and righteous in their daily life. Both parents took a lively interest in the training of their children. The mother taught the simpler doctrines in regard to the daily life and conduct, whilst the profounder teaching of Confucius—that children shall be obedient to parents and rulers—was constantly inculcated by the father and teacher. The mothers in Japan are usually ignorant, but their moral influence upon the

children is very good. The chief aim of a Japanese mother is to foster the spirit of ambition in her sons. The children of parents belonging to the Samurai have special educational privileges. Oshikawa was one of the favorites of the family. At seven years of age he went to a private school where he was taught reading and writing. (Arithmetic was a special branch for the boy-merchant. The boys of the nobler class had no idea of the value of money.) He was an apt student and a born leader among his companions. At the age of nine he entered the public school. During this time he underwent the usual discipline in military tactics. He became very skillful in the use of the spear. As a wrestler his eldest brother had always to take to the ground. He was the life of the family. The Japanese have great fondness for amusements. The toy shop of Japan is the mirror of Japanese life. "The contrast between the Chinese and the Japanese character in this respect is radical. It is laid down in one of the very last sentences in the Trimetrical Classic, the primer of every school in the Flowery land,

that play is unprofitable." In Japan it is different. There, not only do the children play, but the parents also share in the innocent sports. It is doubtful whether any other nation in the world affords so much varied amusement for the children. Let us fondly hope that this ancient happy feature in Japanese life may not disappear as the nation arises from the darkness of heathenism to enjoy the light of Christianity.

CARRYING BABY.

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IV.

ADOPTION.

"WHAT in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

ADOPTION.

UNDER the feudal system there used to be a law that all the sons in a family, save the first-born, had to be adopted by another family and assume that family name. Adoption had two objects: a material and a religious one. The material object was to secure to the family its hereditary rights, the benefits of the Samurai class. The religious object was to maintain the worship of ancestors. The son by adoption usually became the son-in-law, if the adoptive father had a daughter. In case a son was not adopted by another family, he was called Hiya-meshi-Kui (eater of cold rice). This was a term of contempt, since cold rice had no value, but was given to servants, beggars and dogs. Where families of rank had daughters and no sons, it was highly important that they select and adopt a worthy son in order to perpetuate the family name and to receive the pension from the government.

In case the father died without succeeding in

this, his name was stricken from the roll of the Samurai class, and the remainder of the family became Heimin (common people).

At the age of eleven years the subject of this biography became the adopted child of a family by the name of Oshikawa. They lived about half a mile from the old home, and he would often visit the scenes of his early childhood. Owing to the strict discipline in his new home, two former adopted sons had fled to their own homes, but the young lad proved to be obedient and faithful.

In his new home he continued his studies and practice in military tactics. When he reached the age of fifteen his adopted father took him along to battle. He was the smallest and youngest in the army, and his premature going to war proves that he had a very strict and determined father. This uncommonly strange experience on the field of battle was to give the youthful warrior a nobler conception of his country's rights. Unlike his own father, the elder Oshikawa was a very bitter and violent opposer of the introduction and use of anything foreign. He would not tolerate any foreign measure, though it might be of great value to the country. His

feelings ran so high in this respect that he did not even allow his new son to acquire the English language. Towards the close of his life he became more moderate in his views, and the power of Christianity had laid hold of him to such an extent that Christ found a place in his heart, and his death was not altogether without hope to his family.

Both mothers are living at this time in covenant relation with God. The real mother of our welcome visitor was the first to see and to enjoy the sweet light of the Gospel in the province of Matsuyama, which has a population of thirty thousand. This region was a dark spot in Japan. The new religion had only enemies in this province. Three years after Oshikawa's conversion his own mother's heart, through the influence of his life and teachings, became broken and contrite on account of her sins, and she found forgiveness and peace through the blood of Jesus. She has been a devout and consistent worshipper of God for fifteen years, and in her old age she not only rejoices in the salvation of her own soul, but in the work of her dear son, whose services God so wonderfully owns and blesses. The suc-

cess of the work of Oshikawa, so well begun and so ably continued, is due, no doubt, in great measure, to the sympathy, counsel and prayers of his own mother. Of her seven children, he was especially set apart to help to promote the welfare of his country. She always bore him on her heart, and rejoices to believe that the blood of her husband and of his father was as seed sown which is now yielding precious fruit in the glorious ingathering of immortal souls into the Kingdom of God. Brother Oshikawa speaks most tenderly and affectionately of the encouragement he received from his adopted mother in acquiring the English language at his native home. Without her constant and earnest efforts to quiet her husband, who strenuously opposed even the study of English, the eager learner could not have drunk as deeply as he did at the well of English Literature.

It is a striking coincidence that both mothers, with Christ in their hearts, should now be living as near to each other in Sendai as they did in heathen darkness in Matsuyama. Then they were living for themselves ; now they are helpers in the spread of the Gospel. May they live long and well and happy !

V.

MARRIAGE.

"THE joys of marriage are the heaven on earth,
Life's paradise, great princes, the soul's quiet,
Sinews of concord, earthly immortality,
Eternity of pleasures."

HIS MARRIAGE.

AT the age of eighteen he was married to Miss Tsune (*constant*), a daughter of Masayuki (*attainment*) Oshikawa. To the Japanese mind the time of adoption into the family was the virtual engagement of the son and daughter. This engagement was made beforehand by the parents of the contracting parties. The sealing of the contract was usually preceded by the parents exchanging visits and by carefully examining whether the prospective union would be congenial. The children had no voice in effecting these arrangements; but when the parties did not love each other, the marriage contract was sometimes broken. In the case of an adult, where no such marriage contract had been made, it was customary for the parents to ask the consent of the son before they made the choice of a life-companion for him. Great preparations were made for the wedding-day, especially on the part of the bride. In families of rank the bridal out-

fit was extensive, extravagant and costly, consisting of from five to seven wardrobes full of silk dresses, with head ornaments, and also a mirror and a sword. The sword, a symbol of chastity, was always sent to the husband prior to the wedding, and in the event of the betrayal of the affections, this instrument was used to kill the wife. It was a common thing after the wedding to discuss the bridal outfit, and the weight of the wardrobes was generally a sign of its value. The quaint story is told, that on a certain occasion a witty bride filled her wardrobes with stones, so that the carriers of them might believe that she was bringing to her husband treasures of great worth. The outfit of the common people consisted of plainer attire and fewer ornaments.

The wedding ceremony is very simple. No priest is present to pronounce them "twain one flesh;" no ritual is used and no fee is paid. The ceremony consists of drinking a few drops of *sake* (wine) three times, by the bride and groom and the parents of both.

A very elaborate feast winds up the ceremony. One or more rooms in the old homestead are occupied by the newly-married couple, where they often remain for life.

TEACHER AND CLASS. Page 40.

VI.

SOJOURN AT TOKIO.

"YET then from all my grief, O Lord,
Thy mercy set me free,
Whilst in the confidence of pray'r
My soul took hold on thee."

SOJOURN AT TOKIO.

ABOUT one year after the marriage of Oshikawa, he in company with eight young men from the province of Iyo, were sent to Tokio by the feudal lord. At that time there were three hundred and sixty provinces in the empire of Japan. There was a great deal of competition among the many provinces, and, in order to secure able and efficient men for the responsible positions in his province, this lord chose from among his subjects young men who might pursue a special course of study in the Imperial English College at Tokio, and thereby qualify themselves for their future life-work. After spending three years in this institution it became evident that they could not there acquire a thorough and practical knowledge of the English. Two of the eight young men, one of them being Oshikawa, came to Yokohama at the request of the feudal lord, and began the study of

English with the Rev. James Ballagh, D.D., a missionary of the Reformed Church of America. It was the intention of the government to send Oshikawa to America to qualify him for greater usefulness among his own people. His past training had given him an unfavorable opinion of the Christian religion. He did not like the Christians, and felt that Christianity was the devil-religion.

His antipathy to the missionaries of the cross arose from two things : obedience to his parents and loyalty to his country. The teachings of his parents and the opposition of the country to the new religion made him dread and hate it. Though he despised Christianity with all his heart, yet the idea of our civilization had laid hold of his mind to such an extent that he could not help asking the question, "How could such an evil religion produce such a superior civilization?" The desire to pry into the mysteries of Christianity made him an eager observer of the life, conduct and conversation of the missionaries. He was laboring under the mental delusion that there was some secret method of depriving the people of their reason and of compel-

ling them to become Christians. With this suspicion uppermost in his mind, he closely watched his teacher to see wherein lay his power to make converts. The Japanese mind at this time was very superstitious; the common people thought that Christians, by some magical power, could work wonders. These superstitious ideas, no doubt, were the relics of the influence of the Roman Church, which had at one time a strong hold in Japan. With these peculiar notions of Christianity perplexing his own mind, it was an act of Providence that brought the young Oshikawa into a mission school where he could see and hear that he was entirely mistaken. Rev. Ballagh, who is a very earnest, devout and faithful missionary, paid special attention to this interesting student. The study of the Bible for an hour each day was a part of the course of instruction. The sacred book had no particular interest in it to the apt pupil, but his thirst for English made him the daily reader of its pages. The noble teacher was a mighty man in prayer. His daily communions with God in the presence of the students were fragrant with zeal and love and pity for the nation that then sat under the

shadow of death. These constant outpourings before the throne of God were gentle touches to the hearts of the anxious learners, and in due season made them alive with the conviction that there is a God and that He hears prayer. For nine months these students could not appreciate the word of life nor feel the power of prayer, though they were reading the Bible and hearing the missionary every day. One day the man of God set apart an hour for special prayer. At the close of this prayer-meeting he said to the students: "If any one of you desires to become a Christian let him place a card with his name on my table." The students had no conversation in regard to their intentions about this eventful matter, but, to the great surprise of the zealous missionary, the next morning he found the names of *nine* students on his table, thereby expressing a desire to be baptized into Christ. The secret of these wonderful conversions was the study of the Word and the quickening presence of the Holy Spirit. Prayer was also a power in this instance. In one of his prayers the godly teacher had made a sincere and touching appeal in behalf of the Japanese people, and

WIFE OF REV. M. OSHIKAWA.

Page 46.

brother Oshikawa testifies that the petition made such an impression upon his heart and mind that he began to seek the way of truth.

His simple faith in the Saviour of men made him willing to surrender himself to Christ. He felt the power of the pure, righteous, loving and perfect life of Jesus. To him Christ was God. For Christ he was ready to die.

VII.

CONVERSION AT YOKOHAMA.

"LEAD kindly, Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on.
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene—one step enough for me."

CONVERSION AT YOKOHAMA.

AT the time of his conversion to Christianity the thought of a future reward did not enter his mind, for the Holy Spirit had made Jesus appear to his spiritual eye as the One altogether lovely. His faith in Christ and love of truth made him eager to bring his people to Christ. A confession of Christ in those days was accompanied by many sacrifices. Why? Because the Japanese believed that the new religion taught children to be disobedient to parents and disloyal to country. It is natural that such views, held especially by conscientious persons, would arouse the bitterest hostility to the Christian religion. To show how prevalent this enmity was, it is only necessary to repeat the language of the edict of the government: "So long as the Sun shall warm the earth let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan." Hardly had the young convert been baptized before the rumor was spread abroad and his parents im-

mediately sent him word: "Come home." Oshikawa knew his danger. His father,[1] according to the law and custom of the country, had a perfect right to put him to death. As a son by adoption he was in imminent peril of his life. It is remarkable what courage and fortitude his confession of Christ and the act of baptism gave his soul. Before he publicly allied himself with the people of God he used to conceal the Bible in the folds of his dress, being afraid of the police officer. This fear of men left him after his conversion, and, instead of hiding the blessed book, he carried it openly in his hand. The letter from his parents requesting his immediate return did not shake his faith in God. He went to obtain advice from Rev. David Thompson, D.D., a missionary of the Presbyterian Church. He told his plaintive story to this calm, prudent, godly man, who gave him the advice of Paul to the Philippians: "Be careful for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Besides this spiritual counsel, he also gave him a purse of money which became

[1] As used in this chapter, it refers to the adopted father.

very useful to him afterwards.[1] In the strength of the aforesaid passage of Scripture he undertook the journey to his home, a distance of five hundred miles. Hatred and love, joy and sorrow were mingled in the cup of his reception. The parents were angry, the wife was loving; the parents were suspicious, the wife was trustful. For one week heathen darkness struggled with Christian light. The discussion often waxed hot. The young convert was open to persuasion, and he would always reply to the passionate outbursts of his father: "If any one in this province can convince me that Christianity is an evil religion I will give it up." He continued steadfast in his Christian confidence. "I cannot forsake Christ," was his constant reply to the abusive arguments of his father. At the expiration of one week his own mother came to see him. Here we touch the thrilling point in the experience of the useful Christian. To the Japanese mind the acceptance of Christianity was a heinous crime, justly punishable with death. The mother's heart was filled with shame at the strange conduct of her dear son in

[1] See incident on page 63.

accepting Christianity, which was a disgrace to the nation as well as to the memory of his ancestors, and she could not do otherwise than patiently submit to the final decision of the father. *What might that decision be?* Banishment from home, loss of family title and divorce from his wife, or even death.

Ere the fatal day arrived for the verdict of the parent his own mother spent a whole night with him, earnestly pleading with her dear boy to give up the new religion and to remain loyal to his ancestors. After three hours of tender, loving and fervent intercession, she fell down at his feet (an unusual act for Japanese parents) beseeching him with tears in her eyes: "O my loving son have pity upon your dear mother, deny Christianity, save your life and cling to the righteous doctrines of your ancestors."

There was a long and painful silence between the mother and son. The loving appeal of the mother wrought upon the tender feelings of the son to such an extent that he could not at once say *no* to her urgent request.

This was the great crisis of his life. In the depths of his heart he cried out to God for help.

SONS OF REV. M. OSHIKAWA.

The Lord heard his supplication and enabled him to tell his dear mother in an emphatic way: "I must stand firm in the Christian faith; I will suffer any hardship, even death itself, rather than commit the unpardonable sin by denying my Lord and Saviour."

This noble confession made a deep impression upon his mother. By it she was taught the sober truth, that to deny the Lord with such strong convictions of heart and mind would be an unpardonable sin. Rather than have her son commit such a crime, she was content to see him die at the hands of his father. She left the room, with joy and sorrow commingling in her heart—joy that her son had such a strong determination, and sorrow that by clinging to his convictions he could not escape the severe punishment by the father and the utter rejection by the people. It must be borne in mind that when he became a Christian he had no longer any friends in his native province. Like the Saviour, he was despised and rejected by his own people. But there was one friend in the province of Iyo who did not forsake him—it was his dear wife. During his brief stay at home she

saw the good effects Christianity had upon his life, and through his daily instructions, she acquired a sufficient knowledge of Christianity to make her favorable to it. She gave her parents to understand that by killing her husband they would ruin her, and by disowning him she would forsake them.

The daughter's determination was triumphant over the father's severity, and he could not carry out his original intentions. God's protective hand may be clearly seen in this strange providence, and the incident confirms the declaration of the Apostle: "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" The next morning a near relative, at the request of the father, who was too angry to speak to his son, came into the room and said: "Leave home soon."

VIII.

VOW OF FIDELITY.

"We expect a bright to-morrow;
All will be well;
Faith can sing through days of sorrow,
All, all is well.
On our Father's love relying,
Jesus every need supplying,
Or in living, or in dying,
All must be well."

VOW OF FIDELITY.

PRIOR to his departure from the old home, with its many tender and sacred associations, a solemn vow of fidelity to each other was made between the young Christian husband and the fond, loving wife. With God as their witness, the two hearts married anew, though for nine years thereafter they did not enjoy each other's presence and help. The husband vowed that he would forsake every other, and cleave to her only, so long as life should last. The wife made a similar promise. They did not know what the results of this new and (to their people) strange procedure might be. Oshikawa's life was in constant peril; but the determination of his soul was so strong, and his eagerness to elevate his own countrymen so intense, that he was willing to die for the truth's sake. Here we have a repetition of the experience of Isaac when laid by Abraham on the altar. When just ready to be slain, by the mercies of God in

His own way, the victim was rescued as the first fruits of the faith in Japan, and through him many souls have become the heirs of eternal salvation. At the time of his conversion there were only six known Protestant Christians in the whole Empire of Japan.

.He bade an affectionate farewell to the wife of his bosom, and during a period of nine years he met her only on two occasions, at her home at intervals of several years. This long separation was due to the ill-will of the father. The younger Oshikawa exemplified *in deed* the spirit of the Gospel that "If any man will follow Christ, he must be willing to deny himself, forsake all and take up his cross." Christianity laid a heavy burden upon this young, vigorous and burning disciple of Christ, but, with a martyr-spirit, he left his home and came to Yokohama. The journey was a long and dreary one. The needs of his own dear people, who were sitting in the darkness of sin, laid hold upon his very soul, and he was sorrowful for their sakes. But his heart was full of joy in view of the golden sheaves that he knew, by the help of the Lord, he could gather for the Kingdom of Heaven.

IX.

HIS CAREER AS A STUDENT.

"He who can part from country and from kin,
And scorn delights, and tread the thorny way,
A heavenly crown, through toil and pain, to win—
He who reviled can tender love repay,
And buffeted, for bitter foes can pray—
He who, upspringing at his Captain's call,
Fights the good fight, and when at last the day
Of fiery trial comes, can nobly fall—
Such were a saint—or more—and such the holy Paul."

HIS CAREER AS A STUDENT.

HIS return to Yokohama was a great victory for the Gospel. The missionaries saw in him one of the brightest trophies of their labors. His steadfast adherence to the faith had a good influence upon another convert of his province, who went home about the same time on a similar mission. This man was weak in the faith, and ready to deny it; but when he saw the bold courage and strong determination of his friend, he too forsook his pleasant home and large inheritance and came to Tokio, bringing his wife with him. He became a good helper to the infant church at Tokio, where he also continued the practice of medicine. He died a few years ago, a true believer in the saving power of our holy religion.

Mr. Oshikawa came to Yokohama penniless. He was fully persuaded that he must qualify himself by a course of study for the Christian ministry. From henceforth he took as his motto: "I

will spend my life in the service of Christianity." His faith was put to the test. He had no means wherewith to prosecute his studies, but he was so strong in the Lord that he knew He would supply all his wants. For three months he was a beneficiary student, the missionaries aiding him. He now felt that he must provide a way for his self-support. To this end he taught men and women the Japanese language, and in many other ways he tried to make money, so that he might not be a burden to the missionaries.

He did not like the idea of being a beneficiary, for he knew that there were younger men who had no way of supporting themselves, and in order to help them he was willing to deny himself. His self-denying spirit furnishes a very forcible example to the young men in the Church who feel that they ought to be ministers of Christ, but who do not see how they are to receive the proper training. Let such find a powerful stimulant in his experience, and make an effort, at least, to enter the holy ministry.

He studied theology for four years in Yokohama, under Rev. S. R. Brown, D.D., a minister of the Reformed Church in America. Four other

teachers were helpers in preparing him for his great life-work. During his student life he frequently spoke to large audiences. The subject of his first sermon was Faith:—"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11 : 1).

The sermon was delivered in a large theatre in the presence of an attentive audience of several hundred, and made a deep impression. Whilst pursuing his studies he was a hard worker for the Gospel, and by his feeble efforts not a few were led to Christ.

As in the case of our own ministers in olden times so here, the advantages of a thorough theological training were not at hand, but he made the best use of his time and became duly qualified rightly to divide the Word of God. His stay at Yokohama gave him an opportunity not only to acquire an education, but also to form the acquaintance of the missionaries. He had great confidence in their purity, integrity and fidelity. To him their lives, conduct and conversation became an object-lesson. He could see that they had been with Jesus and had learned of Him. He frequently speaks of them in the most grate-

ful terms for what they did for him in temporal and spiritual things.

He was one of the first elders in the First Christian congregation in Yokohama. Subsequently he had a call from this church to become its pastor, but his modesty forbade his acceptance of that honor. It may be of interest to mention the fact that the beautiful idea of Church Union had its origin in the first Christian church of Yokohama. In its early days an effort was made towards union with the Congregational Church at Kobe. The congregation at Yokohama did not assume the title "Dutch Reformed Church," but simply "The Church of Christ in Japan," looking towards a closer union in the future with sister churches.

X.

CALL TO NIIGATA.

"THE light is ever silent;
Most silent of all heavenly silences.
Such let my life be here;
Not marked by noise, but by success alone,
Not known by bustle but by useful deeds,
Quiet and gentle, clear and fair as light.
Yet full of its all penetrating power,
Its silent but resistless influence;
Wasting no needless sound, yet ever-working,
Hour after hour, upon a needy world."

CALL TO NIIGATA.

DR. T. A. PALM, a man of great celebrity both as a physician and as a missionary, sent a call from Niigata to Yokohama for a native helper who could aid him in his church-work. This place was a hard field for missionary work. It was a strong-hold of Buddhism, and the people were very bitter against Christianity. The interpreter who was helping Dr. Palm withdrew from the work on account of the persecution of the people. One day while he was conducting a service several foes of the cause came and took him off the pulpit, beating him with their fists, until the police set him at liberty. It will be seen from this incident that to enter the place as an evangelist would be accompanied with more or less of personal danger. The helper who fled from Niigata was a Mr. Amenomori. Why did this man forsake his post of duty? It is the opinion of those who know him best that he never

was a sincere Christian. After he left Niigata he came to Yokohama and forsook Christianity. In May last he was the orator at the imposing service held in the great Buddhist temple at Ikegami, Japan. This religious service was held after the Buddhist's rites in memory of the men who lost their lives in the sunken vessel "Oneida," belonging to the United States, and whose remains were found some time ago. It seems that Mr. Amenomori is neither a Buddhist nor a Christian, but an agnostic.

The loud call from Niigata for an evangelist rang into the ears of Mr. Oshikawa, but he did not feel that the voice came from heaven. He gave great heed to it, however, and made it a subject of earnest prayerful study. He had frequently heard of the pressing need of an evangelist, but the necessity of his accepting the call did not become clear to him until one Sabbath evening at prayer-meeting, where the Rev. James Ballagh, D.D., made it the subject of special prayer. At that service, in answer to a fervent prayer, Mr. Oshikawa felt the Spirit's power urging him to go

to Niigata. Such was the overshadowing of the Spirit that he, in the midst of prayer, arose from his knees and said: "I will go, for the Lord commands me." It was the last of December, and Niigata lay two hundred and sixty-three miles west from Tokio. His journey lay over rough mountain roads, almost impassible on account of the deep snows and strong winds. He had to pass through Shinano, the coldest and highest spot in Japan, and the largest province in the empire. He was very poor and without sufficient clothing to protect him from the cold. His friend and teacher, the Rev. S. A. Brown, D.D., supplied him with three of his own suits, fur gloves and a pair of boots. Unfortunately the coats were too large and the boots were too small, but fit or no fit he put them on to keep warm during his long and tedious journey. He had to make the trip on foot, and it took him thirteen days to reach Niigata. He spent two days in the town of Uyeda, where he met a few believers who were afraid to call themselves Christians. "They kept the Sabbath and met regularly to worship God and study

the Bible ; they had only a copy of the Gospel of Matthew, and yet they came to a knowledge of God and His worship by this alone." This little band of secret disciples were very happy to meet a bearer of glad tidings, and they begged him to remain with them to teach them more fully the precious truths of the Lord Jesus. He spent two whole days in strengthening the faith of these timid Christians, and the work of the Lord continues to prosper among them until this day. One of their number has since become a minister of the Gospel and is now the successful pastor at Yokohama of the largest Christian church in Japan. Rev. Oshikawa resumed his journey, suffering great hardships, and on January 2, 1876, reached Niigata. His appearance on arriving there was like that of John the Baptist. His attire was very strange and unusual to the eye of a Japanese ; being so very cold he not only wore his native dress, but the foreign garments given him by his loving teacher. He made quite an unfavorable impression on the cook in the house of Dr. Palm, who at once said : "This man will be useless here."

He immediately began his work and continued it in the face of much opposition and many difficulties, but his labors were very fruitful. A flourishing church exists at this place whose members evince a strong faith and a firm reliance on their Covenant-Father. Mr. Oshikawa spent nearly four years here. In connection with this church he also served nine out-stations. He spent about one-half of his time in pastoral work, the most remote station being fifty miles distant. The rough roads, snow drifts and fierce winds made travel exceedingly difficult. Mr. Oshikawa had to reach his appointments on foot.

During the third year of his stay in Niigata Mrs. Oshikawa, by the permission of her father, came to join him in his arduous labors and to share the joys and sorrows of his ministry. Her coming was as a bright light in the dark cloud which had so long overhung his pathway, and ever since that time husband and wife have been zealously laboring for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. The Lord has blest their union with four children. Two boys are still living, and the father cherishes

the fond hope that the Master may use them in His service. He has given them to the Lord with the fervent prayer that He may place them in spheres of life where they may best serve Him. He would like to see them in the work of the ministry, but he says if they should lack the "gift" he would rather see them become farmers or merchants. He believes that inefficient pastors corrupt Christianity and retard the progress of Christ's Kingdom in the earth.

During the first year of his ministry at Niigata, he preached every evening to large congregations, and he relates that one-half of his listeners were Buddhist priests. These always occupied the front pews, and with their shaven heads gave interest to the meeting. It was customary after the services for the priests to come forward, ask questions and discuss them with the missionaries. Such discussions were the attractive features of the evening, and often continued until midnight. Their ignorance of Christianity made it easy for Mr. Oshikawa to defeat their arguments. The priests, as a class, are the worst characters. The voice of con-

BUDDHIST PRIESTS.

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science no longer impresses them. Their position as priests should entitle them to high esteem, but because they preach what they do not believe the intelligent despise them. The people were eager to detect any fault in Christianity. They came every day to his room to argue against the truth, but a few also came to learn about Jesus. It was difficult for him to walk along the street. The boys would call him "Yaso" (a term of contempt), and fanatical persons would frequently pour water upon him. Such indecent treatment became the cause of great rejoicing among the people. It was not an infrequent occurrence for an enemy to come to the place of preaching at night, and through the open door hurl bags of ashes against the ceiling, thus emptying their contents on the heads of the listening crowd: These vile wretches could not be detected, owing to the darkness of the room. (They had no electric light in those days). Such abuse by the people might, in the estimation of some, have justified his withdrawal from Niigata, but this was not the cause of his removal to Sendai. Two reasons may be given for his loca-

tion among a people who were more alive to the needs of perishing souls: 1st. A year previous to his departure from Niigata, he paid a visit to Yamagata, Yonezawa and Sendai in the northern part of Japan. He made this trip to explore that portion of the empire. He spent three months among the people, preaching and distributing the Bible among them. They made a favorable impression on his mind, and he felt it his duty to locate there. 2d. In two months after his return three large and destructive fires broke out in Niigata. Nine thousand houses were consumed. Having no preaching place, and the people being occupied in rebuilding their houses, he had but little opportunity to labor among them. These severe conflagrations and the bitter animosities of the people made it plain to his mind that he should locate in the city of Sendai. He brought with him Mr. K. Yoshida as an assistant, who by his piety and zeal has been very helpful to him in the work of Evangelization.

XI.

WORK IN SENDAI.

"BLEST thought! each conflict here, each bitter strife,
Shall but add sweetness to the cup of life.
Each heavy stroke shall but God's child prepare
To be a pillar in His temple there;
There, where the things which darkly now I see,
Shall be in perfect light revealed to me."

HIS WORK IN SENDAI.

A WIDE and effectual door was open to him in this city and the region round about. A church was the fruit of his first year's labor, and eleven members agreed to support him as their pastor. The beginning of his labors in Sendai was very different from that in Niigata. There, out of mere curiosity, the people came in crowds to hear him; here he could not find any one for six months to listen to the preaching of the word. He spent this season of patient waiting and earnest endeavor in visiting from house to house. Though he read the Bible in many families, there was no response to its precious teachings. He had to pave the way before any one would come to hear him tell the story of Jesus and His love. Why should these people be so unwilling to hear the preaching of the gospel? During the period of Reformation (1868) the inhabitants of the province of Sendai, in a war against the emperor of Japan, were

defeated, and some of them fled to Hakodate, one of the five ports of Japan, a flourishing city about three hundred miles distant. Here many of them became converts to the Greek Church, and on returning to their homes established congregations. In the course of time the bulk of these Christians became merely nominal adherents to the Church. Their lives were a constant reproach upon the Christian religion, and this, coupled with an inborn prejudice against Christianity, made them unwilling to listen even to the preaching of Mr. Oshikawa. After six months of unsuccessful toil, he hired a very attractive place on the main street, and at the close of one month his audiences were large, attentive and interesting. From the time of his arrival in Sendai the work grew, but the services had to be held in unsuitable rooms. Not until the year 1887 did the congregation enjoy their own place of worship. At this time they purchased a large Buddhist temple, with a seating capacity of five hundred, for the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars. To the Christians at Sendai this purchase was a great victory for the gospel. Heretofore this place was used for

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the worship of many gods ; now it was solemnly set apart for the worship of the One true and living God. This is the first instance in the Mission work of Japan that a Heathen temple became a Christian church. The congregation has outgrown the temple. Rev. Oshikawa feels the necessity of a new house of worship, and he sincerely hopes that the churches, during his stay in America, will contribute a sufficient sum of money to erect a building that will be an honor to the Reformed Church in the United States, as well as a blessing to the faithful of his own flock.

Rev. Oshikawa has seen sore trials. Not only was the hand of persecution upon him from without, but the Lord led him through the deep waters of affliction. Sickness laid hold upon him, and for three months the Lord taught him on his sick-bed how weak he was. This became a season of heavy distress to him, but through it the Healer of the soul was working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He found great comfort in his communion with God. He says that the map of Japan which hung in his sick chamber, and

the study of the book of Job, gave him much consolation. On that map he saw many places in which the people sat in spiritual ignorance, and to whom he felt he must bring the Lamp of life to "dispel the darkness from their minds, and to open all their eyes."

In the book of Job he saw a man full of trials and bereavements, and whose patient submission to God enabled him to say: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." In this time of his affliction the angel of death also came and bore away a little daughter, the dearest one in the household. Through the thick of the gloom the light of the Cross was still shining in the heart of this man of God, and he could bless the hand that had given and taken away the flower of his family. These light afflictions were not only working out a blessing for this suffering brother, but they also became a benefit to the attending physician, Dr. Koyama. Whilst he was prescribing for his patient, the patient, by his sweet submission amid the crushing bereavement, was teaching him the power of Christianity in the hour of trouble. It was evident to his mind that human

strength alone could not fortify the soul under such trying circumstances, and he began to search out the secret of his patient's ready and cheerful resignation to the painful providences of his daily life.

The child's death became the physician's life. He now came to his patient not to administer medicine for the body, but to receive from his lips the saving balm for his soul. For several months he was an eager seeker for more light about the "Jesus Way," and when he found it he gave up all for Jesus. The readers of our Church papers may recall the fact that when Rev. W. E. Hoy went to Shiroishi, he was met by a Christian physician, who kindly shared with him the hospitalities of his home, this physician being no other than Dr. Koyama, one of the first fruits of Brother Oshikawa's labors in Sendai. His wife, who continued a heathen for seven years after his conversion, recently became a Christian, and enjoys with her husband the benediction of Christianity in the home. Through his influence many persons, among them several physicians, have embraced the Christian religion. He is at the head of a

large corps of physicians in the hospital at Shiroishi, and his position affords him splendid opportunities to care for the souls as well as the bodies of his patients. Our missionaries recognize his worth and appreciate his help.

Until 1885 our faithful missionary, the Rev. Oshikawa, stood aloof from all synodical relations. His first idea was to establish churches on a broad basis under the name of the Church of Christ in Japan. He felt that Christianity could make better progress without denominational distinction. After five years of experiment he gave up this idea. It became plain to his mind that in order rapidly to spread the Gospel in the north of Japan he must have help, both of men and means. He went to Tokio, and made his wants and wishes known to the United Church of Christ in Japan. He was willing to connect his work with the United Church of Christ on two conditions:—

1st. The establishment of a Boys' and Girls' school.

2d. The supply of money for evangelistic purposes.

He had three churches and two hundred mem-

bers. The missionaries at Tokio were impressed with his humility, piety and ability. Subsequently they paid much attention to him and his work. "At his earnest request other laborers were to be sent to assist in the various departments of his work." About this time Rev. W. E. Hoy, of America, a minister of the Reformed Church in the United States, came to Japan. Fortunately he was met by Rev. Oshikawa at Tokio, who soon got his consent to locate at Sendai. The missionaries of our Church agreed to this arrangement, and from that time Sendai became the special field of work for the Reformed Church in the United States.

With the arrival of the new missionary in this interesting and hopeful province the work was carried on with perfect trust, and the end is not yet. The membership comprises several officials and persons of rank. Among the converts is the Vice-President of the Provincial Assembly, an elder in the Sendai congregation, and at this time a probable member of the Imperial Assembly.

The seed of the Gospel sown in tears is

beginning to bear a bountiful harvest. According to the latest statistics our Mission reports seven churches and twelve preaching places. There are ten hundred and twenty-five members; six hundred and twenty-four Sunday-school scholars; contributions for all purposes during the last year are twenty-five hundred and fifty-seven dollars.

Our missionaries have done noble service for the Master, and we can feel amply repaid for every offering made in behalf of our foreign work. They ask for our prayers; they crave our sympathy; they need our help. The Father in heaven bless them.

XII.

SENDAI THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

"By knowledge we do learn ourselves to know
And what to man, and what to God we owe."

SENDAI THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

TO meet the great demand for new men to occupy the various stations, it became necessary to establish a school of the prophets. The call for more pastors and evangelists was nowhere more urgent than in the north of Japan. This institution is a child of faith and prayer. It had an humble beginning. We believe that the hand of God led the brethren, Hoy and Oshikawa, to establish the Training-school and to maintain it at a cost of much toil and self-sacrifice. The Sendai widow who came forward with her twelve pieces of silver, and kindled a holy enthusiasm in their hearts, led others to make sacrifices for this noble cause. This gift deserves more than a passing notice, for it was given not out of her abundance, but it was all that she had. She had saved this amount in case of her sickness or death. Her history is unknown, but this that she hath done will be spoken of as a memorial of her. Six young

men came forward as candidates for the holy ministry. They were poor, because they had given up their profession as school-teachers to learn in the school of Christ. Faith brought them to the feet of the teachers, Hoy and Oshikawa, and faith found a way for their support. Brother Hoy not only taught, but fed and clad them at his own expense for one year. This unknown act of self-sacrifice is worthy of special mention, because it multiplied the widow's gift an hundred-fold. His heart was not at rest until the Training school a year ago found a veritable home through an additional offering known as the "John Ault Memorial Building," the gift of Rev. and Mrs. W. E. Hoy.

The training-school, like the tabernacle of old, was a movable institution. It began in an old, dingy house along the outskirts of the city; later it was moved into an unsuitable building on our Sambancho lot. Again, it found a home in several small rooms attached to what was once a Buddhist temple, but which is now the place of worship of our Sendai congregation.

Last year the students took possession of the

JOHN AULT MEMORIAL BUILDING. Page 90.

two-story, well-built Japanese building, and until the Church will furnish the money for the Oshikawa Memorial Building, it cannot fully serve its original purpose as a dormitory. This building is just such a home for the school as will invest it with such permanency as nothing else could give it. It is a memorial to a dear father, and it is an example of true missionary consecration. How loudly the act speaks to all who profess the name of Christ! The faculty of the Seminary consists of Revs. W. E. Hoy, D. B. Schneder, M. Oshikawa, T. Abe and Mr. Yendo.

These brethren are wielding a good influence in this most important branch of our mission work. The students in attendance have come from various parts of the empire. The present accommodations will not warrant the increase of students, and yet each year young men of good talent and earnest hearts apply for admission. Upon the Church at home devolves the solemn responsibility of extending the usefulness of this very important department of Christian work. Let it be the subject of much thought, fervent prayer and liberal giving, and

this school will not only occupy a high place in the hearts of the people of our Church, but it will send forth year after year a goodly number of pious, earnest and intelligent young men to labor and pray for the salvation of their countrymen, to the glory of the Master.

XIII.

OUR GIRLS' SCHOOL.

"For learning is the fountain pure
Out from the which all glory springs:
Whoso therefore will glory win,
With learning first must needs begin."

OUR GIRLS' SCHOOL.

JAPAN is enthusiastic on the subject of education. The key to the heart of the Japanese is the school. It is true, they are more anxious for education than for Christianity, but the missionaries sincerely believe that the school-room will become the net whereby they may catch immortal souls for Jesus. The government does not yet realize the spiritual needs of the women and girls of Japan. To some extent it understands their needs. It wishes them to have a practical education, but it is not yet willing to accept Christianity. Within the last few years the Christian Church has been paying much attention to the condition of women in heathen lands. The Gospel has done much for woman, and it is felt to-day that the conversion of Japan can be brought about only as the native women engage in the work of the Lord. Heathenism regards woman as the slave of man.

With the advent of Christ into the world

woman rose from her menial condition to man's inferior in nothing, to his equal in all things, and to his superior in many things. In order that heathen women may occupy their rightful position in the social economy, they must enjoy a liberal Christian training. To this end our missionaries have seen proper to found the Girls' school at Sendai. From the beginning it was a success. The two excellent lady teachers, Miss Lizzie R. Poorbaugh and Miss Mary B. Ault, bade farewell to their native land with the full determination to carry the glad tidings of salvation to their unfortunate sisters at Sendai. The constant reports of their labors in the Girls' school prove that the Lord is giving them the desire of their hearts. Not only are their interesting pupils receiving the proper training of the mind, but ever and anon a heart opens to receive the gentle baptism of the Spirit. Every year some of them profess Christ and embrace the benefits of His saving grace. These bright and promising girls will become the future mothers of Japan, and in this way the home will become the vestibule of heaven.

Miss Ault having married the Rev. W. E.

GIRLS' SCHOOL BUILDING.

Hoy, Miss Emma F. Poorbaugh, a sister of Miss Lizzie, was elected by the Board of Foreign Missions to succeed her. Our ladies are well qualified to engage in this noble work among the women and girls of Japan. As in the case of the Training school, so with the Girls' school, to insure its permanent success a large and substantial building became necessary. The money for the comfortable structure that now adorns our beautiful Sambancho lot was supplied by the Church at home. It is a fitting monument to the liberality of our people, as well as a constant testimony to Christianity, in a city whose people are not yet the people of God.

XIV.

EVANGELISTIC WORK.

"Ye Christian heralds, go, proclaim
Salvation in Emmanuel's name:
To distant climes the tidings bear,
And plant the rose of Sharon there."

EVANGELISTIC WORK.

REV. OSHIKAWA is a born evangelist. No sooner had the grace of God brought peace to his soul than his mouth became a trumpet to proclaim the precious Gospel of salvation to his perishing brethren. His soul was set on fire from heaven, and Jesus became the theme of his lips. It is impossible to estimate the number of souls who were led through his instrumentality into the kingdom of God. Reference has already been made to his influence upon his dear wife and loving mother, who were gradually brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. During his student-life he could not hold his peace for his country's sake. At Niigata he stood with heroic boldness and made known the unsearchable riches of Christ. In Sendai he patiently bore with the slowness of the people to respond to his burning appeals. The record of his work is imperfect, for it mentions only those converts

who made their profession of Christ in his presence. The Book of Life alone will reveal how many sheaves were bound by his hands, and how many trophies were won by his efforts. It must ever be borne in mind that our evangelistic harvest is the result of his planting. This is the bright side to the mission work of our Church in Japan. On the whole, the work in the several districts is very encouraging. One of its weaknesses is the lack of evangelists. "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few." May the Lord of the harvest continue to prosper us in this work, and grant us such results as will make glad the hearts of all His people, both in the home church and in the foreign field. The Church dare not neglect this most glorious department of mission work among the heathen. The great problem lies before us, and the Scriptures furnish the only practical, possible solution. Every Christian must become a herald of the Cross.

This is the marrow of the Gospel:—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Obverse. *Reverse.*

THE WIDOW S MITE. Page 103.

XV.

HIS VISIT TO AMERICA.

"By Thine unerring Spirit led,
We shall not in the desert stray:
By Thy paternal bounty fed,
We shall not lack in all our way:
As far from danger as from fear,
While Thine almighty love is near."

HIS VISIT TO AMERICA.

THE Japanese are not a strong-bodied people. This is partly due to climate, food and mode of living. It is very evident that a feeble frame cannot endure for many years the trials and denials of the Christian ministry on heathen soil. Rev. Oshikawa is not a strong man, and hence his physical strength was not equal to his mental powers; he is weak in the flesh but strong in the spirit. Thirteen years of incessant labors for the Master wore him out. The state of his health has been such, for the last few years, that he has not been able to do full work. A little more than a year ago he went to the Hok Kiado (North Sea road), in the north of Japan, for rest. Alas! he did not find it. He was so persistently besieged for sermons, lectures, addresses and interviews, and at the same time it being so difficult for him to say, No, to any call of Christian work, that resting in his native country became out

of the question. Hence competent medical authority decreed that unless he obtained a complete rest and change, there would be great danger of his breaking down entirely. Some of his personal friends gave him money to come to America. Since the brother is more especially identified with the work of our Mission at Sendai, our missionaries also gave him aid. He came to this country in March of the present year to find the rest he so much needs, and to enjoy the benefits of our richer experiencein grace and truth. We are sure that his visit will afford his own people a better conception of our country's glorious fame and genuine worth. He will sojourn amongst us for about one year, and we bespeak for him a cordial welcome everywhere.

He has a threefold purpose in view in coming to America :—

1st. To regain, if possible, his physical strength for his future life-work. 2d. To imbibe the spirit of our Christian institutions. 3d. To raise funds for the new Seminary building and Church edifice in Sendai. May the Lord grant him the first; may the institutions bestow the second; may the churches provide the last.

SEAL OF SENDAI THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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XVI.

CONCLUSION.

"To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
One God and Persons Three,
Whose name we bear, in whom we live
Eternal glory be."

CONCLUSION.

HAS a life so full of self-sacrifices no lessons for us? Can we close this little book without feeling wiser and better for its perusal? Circumstances will hardly afford all the readers of these pages the pleasure of a personal interview with this servant of the Lord. Truly the Divine artist has wrought out a noble specimen of Christian character in this humble disciple of the lowly Jesus. Here is a body kept in subjection, lest, after preaching to others, he himself might be a castaway. Here is a mind stored with the varied lore of the ages, for the high purpose of serving his dear people. Here is a soul, radiant with the light of Jesus and quietly shedding its rays for the healing of his nation. No one can come in contact with this man of God without feeling the better for it. We confidently believe that brother Oshikawa is but on the threshold of his future useful-

ness. His work has only been begun. Eternity alone will see its completion. May his precious life enkindle holy and heavenly desires in every bosom, and constrain all to new and persistent labors for God and Mankind. To God be the Glory.

SUPPLEMENT.

HISTORY OF MISSION WORK IN JAPAN.

"BLESS we, then, our gracious Lord,
Ever praise His glorious name;
All His mighty acts record,
All His wondrous love proclaim."

SUPPLEMENT.

HISTORY OF MISSION WORK IN JAPAN.

JAPAN is a very ancient nation. Its first emperor sat upon the throne about 800 B. C. Very little was known of this hermit nation prior to the sixteenth century. In the year 1549 Francis Xavier, "the Apostle of the Indies," came to Satsuma and began to scatter the good seed of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Religiously, Japan was ripe for the new faith. Vast numbers of the natives became converts to Christianity. "Three of the most powerful nobles—the princes of Bungo, Harima and Omura—were among the converts. In 1582 the Japanese sent an embassy with letters and presents to Rome to do honor to the pope and assure him of their submission to the Church." The famous regent, Hideyoshi, was a bitter enemy of the new religion, but in order to win the southern *daimios* (governors) who were mostly Christians, he did not oppose it during his early reign. The native Chris-

tians soon became disobedient to his rude and arbitrary orders, and this made him inquire of "a subject of the double kingdom of Spain and Portugal how his king had managed to possess himself of half the world?" The Spaniard replied: "He sends priests to win the people; his troops are then sent to join the native Christians, and the conquest is easy." This reply made a deep impression on a man who was never trifled with. He felt that the Roman Catholic Church was trying to usurp the government of Japan, and this conviction drove his successor to issue the terrible edict: "So long as the sun shall warm the earth, let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan." A few years later a fierce war ensued, in which sixty thousand Christians lost their lives. This, in brief, is the first chapter of the mission work in Japan. It is written with the pen of war in the ink of human blood. Its influence was very damaging to the cause of true religion. The Roman Catholic Church has very little prestige in the empire at the present time. Its converts are mostly from the poorer and more ignorant

classes. Active mission work in Japan is of modern origin, and the wonderful progress of the Gospel is due to the influence of the Protestant Church.

The second chapter begins with the visit of Commodore Perry and his party, who cast anchor in the bay of Yeddo, on the Lord's day, in the year 1853. They sang the familiar words:

> "All people that on earth do dwell,
> Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
> Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell—
> Come ye before Him, and rejoice."

On that holy day God put the key to the Sunrise kingdom into the hand of Commodore Perry, and soon after some of its ports were thrown open to the commerce of the world and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When we remember that thirty years ago there were but few native Christians and fewer foreign missionaries in Japan, the progress of the Gospel has been truly wonderful. At first the work was carried on by foreign missionaries, without any natives to assist them. The

pioneers — Verbeck, Hepburn, Williams and Brown—had not only to sow the seed, but to prepare the soil for its reception. For a period of fifteen years these men of God were preparing themselves for the conflict with a gross heathenism, and during all this time they did not enjoy the satisfaction of making a single known convert for Christ, but by the grace of God they persevered, and the bread of life that they cast upon the troubled waters is returning after many days.

Very few of the nobler and more influential class were willing to listen to the Gospel. Most of the converts came from the lower and more ignorant class. We can easily see that the churches in the beginning were weak and imperfect in every respect. How to reach the better class became the question of absorbing interest with the missionaries. They found its solution in the establishing of schools. The management of the schools was dependent upon them. They were obliged to exercise much patience with their rude and crude pupils, but in the school-room they reached a higher standard of personal consecration to

Christ and of intelligent equipment for a successful warfare against the adversaries of Christianity. These students have since become the faithful evangelists who are sacrificing their lives for the sake of the Gospel. As the mission schools were increasing their forces, the nation at large also began to move in the direction of Christian civilization. The people lost confidence in their old religion and saw that true progress lay in the pathway of the Christian institutions. This feeling made them eager to see and hear those who came from other countries; they were struggling after something which they could not attain under their old civilization. From this time on the foreign missionary was no longer the exclusive worker, but the Japanese assistant appears by his side. The latter accompanies the former from place to place, preaching the Gospel, teaching the ignorant, visiting the sick, strengthening the weak and helping in every way the work of the Lord.

The native helpers have become, to a great extent, the pastors of the churches. They are indeed not yet perfect in spiritual things, but they are daily advancing in grace, truth and holiness.

The Church of Christ in Japan is gradually strengthening herself with all the varied helps of modern times. The evangelistic work is carried on mainly by native pastors, while the training of candidates for the holy ministry is the particular work of the foreign missionary.

Men who have made the work of missions in Japan a careful study are agreed that the triumph of the Gospel there depends upon the preaching of the Gospel by the *native* converts. It is plain, therefore, that "the work of training young men for the ministry is by far the most fruitful and permanent method of doing missionary work in Japan. A good native minister can preach more eloquently and make more converts than almost any one of the foreign missionaries; he preaches in his mother tongue, understands his own people better, becomes more intimate with them and has more influence over them. All this, however, presupposes the direct personal contact of the native evangelist with the foreign missionary. By training native young men the missionary multiplies himself manifold. He makes *convert-makers;* and if he can make twelve efficient

convert-makers he does better than if he would make a hundred converts."

The centre of influence in every denomination is the school. The success of the evangelistic work depends, in a large measure, upon the educational institutions. In the future it will become more necessary because the educational progress of Japan is truly wonderful. The enemies which confront Christianity are great and mighty, and it is very important for the native and foreign missionaries to "be able to give a reason for the faith that is in them." The battle there is eminently a battle of intellect. Fully thirty thousand Christians are letting their light shine in the spiritual darkness of Japan, the bulk of whom are young men, who ought to receive a Christian training. It will be hazardous to place these tender plants of grace into institutions that are known as the nurseries of unbelief and skepticism. They need to have thrown around them the sacred influence of Christian schools.

Again, if these young men graduate in a government-school it will be very difficult to induce them to enter a theological seminary.

The Christian Church of Japan needs men whose talents and attainments will fit them for the highest grades of society.

The work of the church in the home-land consists chiefly in supplying the means to establish schools of a high order in which young men and women may receive a broad, liberal, Christian education.

With a native ministry "apt to teach" the Church of Christ in Japan will be able by the help of God to carry forward the work of Redeeming love.

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